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Jordan

Avian Influenza

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Report Highlights:

Jordanian authorities announce approval on AI compensation plan in efforts to protect humans and the poultry industry by culling all domestic bred birds. No new cases of H5N1 been reported. Feed grain consumption seen dropping further, poultry consumption dropped 50 to 85 percent depending on consumers' economic status; almost all small and medium scale poultry producers abandon the industry.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Amman [JO5]
[JO]

Avian Influenza in Jordan

Key words: Avian Influenza (AI), Deadly strain of avian influenza virus (H5N1), Government of Jordan (GoJ), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), polymerase chain reaction (PCR), World Organization For Animal Health (OIE), Mechanically Deboned Meat (MDM)

On April 12, 2006, the Minister of Agriculture (MOA) declared Jordan free of H5N1 virus as no new cases of infected birds had been reported since the virus was initially detected on March 21, and the GOJ undertook measures to stamp out the virus in the country following OIE standards. The measures included the culling of 50,000 birds in Jordan valley and GOJ is now in a second phase survey of efforts to cull an additional 9,000 birds in private hands.

Jordan's first H5N1 case was announced on March 23, 2006 after an owner of a small backyard flock in Kufrenjeh near Ajloun noticed a sick turkey among his birds and notified agriculture officials. GOJ agriculture officials took samples that confirmed by both rapid tests and PCR tests late on March 23 that the case was positive for H5N1. Three other turkeys on the farm tested positive. Samples from the birds were sent to the World Health Organization for confirmation and additional analysis.

Agriculture officials quarantined the area and culled all poultry within a 3 kilometers radius. Twenty people in the area were tested and found to be negative for H5N1 but were started on Tamiflu™ as a precautionary measure. The first case of human infection with the H5N1 virus was reported on March 31, 2006. An Egyptian working in Karak tested positive for the deadly H5N1 strain. The man, identified as construction worker, age 31, arrived in Jordan by boat through the Port of Aqaba on March 27. He came from the Fayoum Province southwest of Cairo. His family bred and slaughtered poultry at home.

MOA is closely monitoring the Kufranjeh/Ajloun area, where the confirmed cases were found. Veterinary authorities have inspected a 10-kilometer radius and no further H5N1 cases have been found. The MOA has culled 12,714 commercial poultry and 7,364 domestic and wild birds. MOA procedures were discussed at the regional OIE conference in Beirut on April 6-7.

GOJ has approved a compensation plan but funds are unavailable, although the Steering Committee on AI has a bng-standing request to the Cabinet for funding. GOJ reports that they are waiting for the situation to take shape, and then make a decision on compensation details.

Both poultry production and consumption are down by 50%, after news spread of the first H5N1 case, consumption dropped to as little as 15 % of normal levels. Importation of day-old-chicks and feed is at a standstill, imports of all poultry banned until further notice. GOJ was criticized after the media reported that the MOA permitted a turkey shipment from Israel. The shipment tested free of AI, but the GOJ decided to destroy the shipment and halt imports.

Farmers are trying to sell off their flocks and are not starting new cycles. Industrial scale farms are reluctant to produce up to their potential with current consumer opinion decidedly reluctant to purchase poultry.

Jordan import most of it's feed from abroad. In 2005, Jordan imported 350,000 MT of corn, 80 percent of imports from the US. This figure is expected to drop sharply.